Components

*after Roger McDonald*

Here are
jade notebook,
milky distance.

A yellow desk,
straws of sun,
coppery wooden knots.

A plunging forest,
light flung
and falling into chords.

And the thought of a river
creeping through the ravine.

Here are the clearest
sounds, all three.

An old man
clumps things into a case
for the last time.

Birds trill,
sketching plans
for the afternoon.

The mind
sweeps it away
with the stems of dried phrases.

*Stuart Cooke*
Buenos Aires Contemporary

The sturdy painter hikes through the swirl
of his grey, Scotland hawk

the stacks build and drill against purple
and pink, horses stop to think

who chopped off his ear? and
left it in the other room

with a small desk by a window
a blanket tucked tight, striped

like my umwelt, the lonely chair staring
it’s all so woody, zero connectivity

my lonely breast, my long, white alien
behind my elbow I’m despair.

The brainy old coral of the landscape
the bubbling stone at dusk—

shrubs grow there, along the ridges
beside the dry riverbed

and the dead, grey woman, plastic doll
sucking her tit.

Eyes half-closed, she looks
below your waist

her ready hand—will she
take life back, take you

by the throat?
Tears of green glass bottles

strident candle maroon.
No one’s lashed with city’s
Stuart Cooke

fiery spools through night brick
but her head splits

then a burning horse onslaught
halo of laser and blossom

cooled into weedy arc
with a crust of skeletal baroque.

Paris was a party; Buenos Aires is Aussie
the storm’s bluest knot

cracks a tiny mule into white
hides it beneath a torn sheet of itself

grows testicles of abstraction
while Eleanor Rigby’s cello reverberates in circles

of white, black, orange and yellow.
Frames splinter in the insatiable pampas mouth

prey dripping with eyeliner and cherry
things get cleaner years earlier:

blurbs get written, vibrant brides
sucked into clowned accordion

world renovated into gleaming
gutted mouse.

Stuart Cooke